

CLAIMS

I claim:

1           1.    A method for automatically mounting a plurality of  
2 remote volumes to a client, comprising:  
3           requesting of a first server said mounting of said volumes;  
4           returning by said first server a set of mounting parameters;  
5 and  
6           automatically mounting said plurality of volumes utilizing  
7 said returned parameters, said parameters , said volumes located  
8 remote to said client, said volumes after mounting behaving as  
9 would a volume native to said client.

1           2.    A method according to claim 1 wherein said requesting  
2 includes:  
3           authenticating said client by said first server via an interface  
4 to said first server, said client authentication characterized by  
5 a login identification (ID).

1           3.    A method according to claim 2 wherein said  
2 authenticating includes:  
3           supplying by the client said login ID and a password intended for  
4 said login ID.

1        4.    A method according to claim 3 wherein said  
2    authenticating further includes:  
3        comparing said supplied password and said login ID with a  
4    stored password on said first server associated with said login  
5    ID; and  
6    if said stored password matches said supplied password for said  
7    login ID, then characterizing said client as successfully  
8    authenticated with said login ID.

1        5.    A method according to claim 1 that further includes:  
2        detecting the presence of a cookie on said client, said  
3    cookie indicating by its presence that said client has installed  
4    a plug-in module; and  
5    if said cookie is not detected, terminating any said volume  
6    mounting.

1        6.    A method according to claim 4 wherein said returning  
2    includes:  
3        if successfully authenticated, retrieving said parameters  
4    from a profile datastore on said first server, said parameters  
5    indexed therein by said login ID; and  
6    assembling a mounting command block, said command block  
7    consisting of a mount command and said retrieved parameters.

1        7.    A method according to claim 1 wherein said requesting  
2    is initiated by an event occurring on said client requiring said  
3    mounting.

1        8.    A method according to claim 7 wherein said returning  
2    includes:  
3        retrieving said parameters from a profile datastore on said  
4    first server, said parameters indexed therein by an identifier  
5    for said event; and  
6    assembling a mounting command block, said command block  
7    consisting of a mount command and said retrieved parameters.

1        9.    A method according to claim 1 wherein said first server  
2    returns said parameters via a plug-in module installed on said  
3    client.

1        10.   A method according to claim 9 wherein automatically  
2    mounting includes:  
3        obtaining an address for said first server;  
4        comparing said address for said first server against a  
5    built-in list of approved servers; and  
6    if said address is not contained on said built-in list, then  
7    terminating the process of automatically mounting.

1        11. A method according to claim 10 further wherein if said  
2 address is contained on said built-in list, then:  
3        passing of said parameters by said plug-in to an application  
4 programming interface (API) of said client; and  
5        completing the mounting of said volume by said API, said  
6 mounting achieved absent of user intervention.

1        12. A method according to claim 1 wherein said remote  
2 interface is an Hypertext Transport Protocol capable browser.

1        13. A method according to claim 1 wherein said parameters  
2 include, for each of said volumes, a volume name, a server alias,  
3 a volume username and volume password.

1        14. A method according to claim 13 wherein said server  
2 alias is resolved to an address of a second server, said second  
3 server housing the volume identified by the corresponding said  
4 volume name.

1        15. A method according to claim 14 wherein said address of  
2 said second server is an Internet Protocol (IP) address.

1        16. A method according to claim 14 wherein said resolving  
2 is achieved by:

3 looking up said server alias in a mapping table; and  
4 retrieving from said look up said address of said server  
5 from said mapping table.

1 17. A method according to claim 6 wherein said mounting  
2 command block is contained in an extensible markup language (XML)  
3 document.

1 18. A method according to claim 8 wherein said mounting  
2 command block is contained in an extensible markup language (XML)  
3 document.

1 19. A system for mounting volumes over a network, said  
2 system comprising:  
3 a client configured to request said mounting; and  
4 a server coupled to said client said server configured to  
5 return a mounting command block to said client.

1 20. A system according to claim 19 further comprising:  
2 a plug-in installed in said client, said plug-in configured  
3 to approve the address of said server.

1 21. A system according to claim 20 further comprising:

2 an application programming interface (API) coupled to said  
3 plug-in and configured to automatically mount said volumes  
4 specified in said mounting command block, said mounting performed  
5 without the need for user intervention.

1 22. An article comprising a computer readable medium having  
2 instructions stored thereon which when executed cause  
3 automatically mounting a plurality of volumes to a client, said  
4 instructions performing:

5 requesting of a first server said mounting of said volumes;  
6 returning by said first server a set of mounting parameters;  
7 and

8 automatically mounting said plurality of volumes utilizing  
9 said returned parameters, said parameters , said volumes located  
10 remote to said client, said volumes after mounting behaving as  
11 would a volume native to said client, said mounting performed  
12 without the need for user intervention.

1 23. In a computer system having a processor and memory, an  
2 apparatus for automatically mounting a plurality of remote  
3 volumes to said computer system, said apparatus comprising:

4 a plug-in module configured to receive from a server a  
5 mounting command block, said mounting command block to include  
6 volume mounting parameters; and

7 an application programming interface coupled to said plug-  
8 in and configured to automatically mount said volumes specified

9 in said mounting command block, said mounting performed without  
10 the need for user intervention.

1 24. An apparatus for automatically mounting a plurality of  
2 volumes to a client, said apparatus comprising:  
3 means for requesting of a first server said mounting of said  
4 volumes;  
5 means for returning by said first server a set of mounting  
6 parameters; and  
7 means for automatically mounting said plurality of volumes  
8 utilizing said returned parameters, said parameters , said  
9 volumes located remote to said client, said volumes after  
10 mounting behaving as would a volume native to said client, said  
11 mounting performed without the need for user intervention.